



**AARP Montana**  
30 W. 14th Street  
Suite 301  
Helena, MT 59601

T 1-866-295-7278  
F 406-441-2230  
TTY 1-877-434-7598  
[www.aarp.org/mt](http://www.aarp.org/mt)

**EXHIBIT** /  
**DATE** 2/9/2009  
**HB** 397

February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009

TO: Members of the House Judiciary Committee

FROM: Roger Thompson, volunteer advocate AARP Montana

RE: HB 397—Establish grandparent registry

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Roger Thompson and I'm a volunteer advocate for AARP Montana—a non-profit non-partisan organization of 165,000 members in this state. AARP Montana believes that an optional registry for concerned grandparents is a win-win situation.

There are over 6,000 grandparents raising grandchildren in this state, and we all can imagine what a truly difficult a task that is. But we know that an interested, engaged, and loving guardian can make all the difference in a child's life. And in the event that a parent can not or should not care for a child, a grandparent is often the next best option. The bill states that a grandparent would be notified should a child be removed from his or her home, and we believe that this simple notification could have immense impacts in a child's life. We urge your support for HB 397.